



# Living Well

Raising Kids, Eating Right, Spending Smart, Living Well

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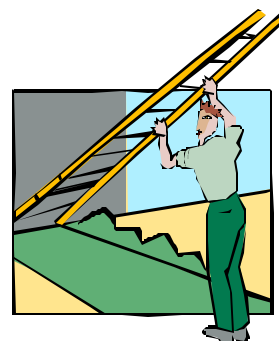
## Preparing Your Home for the Winter

Your monthly budget should include money for routine maintenance and repair for the house and yard, as well as money set aside to accumulate for large, irregular expenses that normally occur as a house ages. Large expenses include interior and exterior painting, repairs or replacement of heating and air conditioning units and appliances, floor coverings and roof surfaces. Housing experts recommend allowing from 1-3% of the market value of the house each year for maintenance and repair costs. While all of these funds may not be needed when a house is new, the accumulated amounts will be needed for large expenses such as re-roofing or heating unit replacement.

Home maintenance is an important factor in providing a healthy, safe environment as well as continuing protection to a growing financial investment. It is much easier to prevent the development of unsafe, unhealthy conditions and structural damage than to pay medical and/or repair bills. Keeping your home clean and in good condition can also increase the value of your property.

Some areas are easier to inspect and do maintenance work in the spring, some in summer and others in the fall or winter months. Here are a few things to include in your fall winter month inspection:

- ⇒ Test smoke alarm, carbon dioxide and heat alarm systems. Replace weak batteries.
- ⌚ Check batteries in flashlights and store in a convenient location.
- ⌚ Check the condition of lamp cords, extension cords and plugs. Discard any worn or damaged cords.
- ⌚ Check around electrical outlets and switch-plates for cold air and insulate and caulk where needed.
- ⌚ Check faucets, hose bibs, and water closets for leaks. Also look for leaks at shut-off valves at sinks, water closet, laundry, and main water shut-off valve.
- ⌚ Check weather stripping on windows and doors for damage and tightness of fit.
- ⌚ Replace the filter in your furnace.
- ⌚ Check the fireplace flue for a tight seal when closed.
- ⇒ Check water line and hose to protect from possible freezing. Garden hose should be drained and stored for the winter.



**Home maintenance is an important factor in providing a healthy and safe environment.**



*The check out counter is a challenge for some families because children want displayed gum or sweets. If it is a problem, ask the store to provide at least one check-out counter without these products.*

## Responsible Consumers

If children are to become responsible consumers, they need experiences that teach skills for decision making. Responsibility for food shopping and money management starts in the preschool years. Preschoolers develop their attitudes and values about money within the family setting.

Some families feel that preschoolers think money grows on trees and that children cannot handle money until high school or after. Grown-ups often teach poor money management skills through example by buying everything children want; rewarding them with sweets; giving them money for no special reason; or buying items to appease them while shopping.

Tantrums, crying or misbehavior in the grocery store do not just happen.

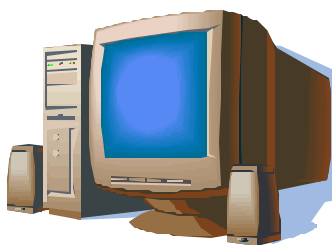
Children have learned to use these behaviors to get attention and what they want. Misbehavior can mean tiredness, sickness, or boredom. Hitting or scolding the child usually accentuates the behavior. Preplanning and a little patience and caring can usually stop the negative scene. While shopping, use positive direction and reinforcement such as verbal praise and approval.

Children learn habits from those around them. In the grocery store they learn from what they see adults doing whether the adults intend them to or not, and by what they are allowed to buy. So instead of giving children the task of selecting sweets, involve them in real food and nutrition decisions for the family.

Written by: Brenda Holden, Senior Extension Agent, FCS, Accomack County

## E-Cycling: A New Twist to "Going Green"

The U.S high tech industry is the only industry whose products become smaller, cheaper, better, faster, and more environmentally friendly year after year.



*Plug -In To eCycling*

Did you know that over 3 million tons of electronic waste goes into America's landfills each year? Computers, mobile phones, personal digital assistants, electronic games, and televisions — all these products contain toxic substances that can harm people and the environment. It is hard to live in today's world without being "plugged-in", "wired", or "wireless". But you CAN make sure that your outdated electronics don't become hazardous waste. Consider upgrading equipment so you can continue to use it, using some parts of an old system to build a new one, donating old electronics to a worthy cause, or taking the equipment to a local recycling program. E-cycling conserves natural resources, protects the environment, helps others, and strengthens the economy. To find

out about programs in your area, contact your city or county recycling coordinator or visit one of these websites: <<http://www.eiae.org/>> [www.eiae.org](http://www.eiae.org), [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org), <<http://www.techsoup.org>> [www.techsoup.org](http://www.techsoup.org), [www.nrc-recycle.org](http://www.nrc-recycle.org). If there aren't any programs available locally, consider participating in one of the retail e-cycling efforts operated by electronics manufacturers or dealers. (Before disposing of any equipment, be sure that all traces of your personal information have been completely erased.) For more information, log onto the Environmental Protection Agency's <<http://www.plugintoecycling.org/>> [www.plugintoecycling.org/](http://www.plugintoecycling.org/) website and "Plug-In To eCycling" today.

Written by: Karen Lynn Poff, Senior Extension Agent, FCS, Shenandoah County

## Facts About Mix-at-Home Cleaners

“Grandma’s recipes” for home cleaning have been a part of household lore for years. While we feel comfortable using these ingredients in cleaning applications, there are important factors to consider.

Commercially formulated cleaning products are tested, packaged and labeled in accordance with standards set by such government agencies as the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Such safety assurances may not exist for how to use and store or instructions on how to treat accidental exposures for mix-at-home recipes. For example, while the effects of “alternative” ingredients are known for their intended exposures, there may not be information on unintended uses of these chemicals or their combination with other

chemicals in homemade cleaning products. If the promoter of the recipe doesn’t have this information, it’s best to check with the manufacturers of the individual ingredients to see if they recommend the mixture.

With mix-at-home recipes, responsibility for product label information falls on the person following the recipe.

### Things to consider:

- ◊ Has the recipe been tested for cleaning purposes?
- ◊ Do you have complete directions for safe and effective use?
- ◊ Are you aware of any safety precautions for mixing the recipe or combining with other products?
- ◊ Do you know how to treat accidental exposures?
- ◊ Are there any special instructions for safe disposal?

Reference: Soap and Detergent Assn.



Before mixing at home, consumers should have clear information so levels of exposure is kept low enough to be non-toxic.

**Know the  
safety  
guidelines  
when mixing  
chemicals.**

## Internet Safety Tips for Children

There are some very important things that you need to teach your child when they are on the computer at home or at school.

- Never give out personal information such as your name, home address, school name, or telephone number in a chat room or on bulletin boards.
- Never send a picture of yourself to someone you chat with on the computer without your parents’ permission.

- Never write to someone who has made you feel uncomfortable or scared.
- Do not meet someone or have them visit you without the permission of your parents.
- Tell your parents right away if you read anything on the internet that makes you feel uncomfortable.

Written by Johanna Hahn, Senior Extension Agent, FCS, City of Newport News



To read more about new privacy rules, visit the Federal Trade Commission’s Web site at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov)

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Eat more grains, fruits and vegetables.

## Teenagers Intake of Fruits and Vegetables



Many children complain about eating their fruits and vegetables. The complaining

continues well into the teen years. Most teenagers lead busy lives that leave no room for healthy eating. Fast food restaurants and convenience foods become the items of choice.

There is an easy and proven way to get teenagers to increase their fruit and vegetable intake. A fruit or vegetable dip makes the perfect addition to any fruit or vegetable item. Perhaps encouraging teens to eat fruit or vegetable dip will aid in getting teens to consume the recommended five fruits and vegetables daily. Teenagers are in greater need for vitamins and minerals. Their needs for iron are particularly high in order to develop lean body mass. Also, calcium needs are high to support the development of peak bone mass.

There are easy recipes that teens can follow to make their own dip. When involved in what they are eating, teenagers begin to increase their intake

of fruits and vegetables. A delicious dip together with a fruit or vegetable of choice makes an excellent addition to any meal or snack.

Try this yummy dip for your fruit:

1 cup of low fat flavored yogurt (strawberry, vanilla, etc)

Brown sugar to taste

Stir ingredients until brown sugar is dissolved



(Written by: Marnya Douglaas, Food Nutrition and Health Dietetic Intern, Portsmouth Extension Office)

**Fruits and vegetables give you carbohydrates for energy, plus vitamins, minerals and fiber.**